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SUBJECT: TRAVEL WARNING - SOMALIA

¶1. This Travel Warning updates information on the unsettled security situation and warns American citizens against travel to Somalia. This supersedes the Travel Warning of May 20, 2008.

¶2. The Department of State warns U.S. citizens against all travel to Somalia, including the self-proclaimed "Republic of Somaliland," since there is no U.S. Embassy or other U.S. diplomatic presence in Somalia. Consequently, the U.S. Government is not in a position to assist or effectively provide services to U.S. citizens in Somalia.

¶3. Terrorist operatives and armed groups in Somalia have demonstrated their intent and capability to attack air operations at Mogadishu International Airport. Kidnapping, murder, illegal roadblocks, banditry, and other violent incidents and threats to U.S. citizens and other foreigners can occur in many regions. Inter-clan and inter-factional fighting flares up with little or no warning. Unpredictable armed conflicts among rival militias are prevalent in southern Somalia, particularly in and around Mogadishu, which has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Somali nationals and the displacement of nearly one million people. In December 2006, Ethiopian military forces entered Somalia in support of the Somali Transitional Federal Government. The continuing Ethiopian military presence and support for the Transitional Federal Government has heightened tensions among rival political and clan factions within Somalia.

¶4. The Sanaag and Sool Regions in eastern Somaliland, bordering on Puntland (northeastern Somalia), are subject to insecurity due to ongoing border disputes and inter-clan fighting. There also have been several fatal attacks and violent kidnappings against international relief workers, including Westerners, throughout Somalia,

Somaliland, and Puntland. Lines of control in Mogadishu are unclear and frequently shift, making movement within this area extremely hazardous. Violent riots have recently occurred in Mogadishu, as thousands of civilians protested rising food prices and the devaluation of the Somali currency.

¶5. Recently, insurgents and extremist elements opposed to the Somali government conducted hit-and-run attacks on several towns in central and southern Somalia, to include the districts of Gedo and Bay (especially the vicinity of Baidoa) in the south.

¶6. U.S. citizens also are urged to use extreme caution when sailing near the coast of Somalia. Merchant vessels, fishing boats, and recreational craft all risk seizure by pirates and having their crews held for ransom in the waters off the Horn of Africa, most especially in the international waters near Somalia. There have been numerous such incidents, highlighting the continuing danger of maritime travel near the Horn of Africa. If transit around the Horn of Africa is necessary, it is strongly recommended that vessels travel in convoys, and maintain good communications contact at all times.

¶7. U.S. citizens who travel to Somalia despite this Travel Warning are urged to register through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov> and obtain updated information on travel and security from the U.S. Embassies in neighboring countries. Travelers to the self-declared "Republic of Somaliland" should register with the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti, and travelers to Puntland or southern Somalia

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should register with the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi.

¶8. The U.S. Embassy in Djibouti is located at Plateau du Serpent, Boulevard Marechal Joffre, Djibouti City; telephone (253) 35-39-95; after-hours telephone number (253) 35-13-43. The mailing address is Ambassade Americaine, B.P. 185, Djibouti, Republique de Djibouti, and their workweek is Sunday through Thursday. The U.S. Embassy in Nairobi is located on United Nations Avenue, Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya; telephone (254)(20) 363-6000; after-hours emergencies (254)(20) 363-¶6170. The mailing address is P.O. Box 606 Village Market 00621, Nairobi, Kenya.

¶9. U.S. citizens should also consult the Department of State's Country Specific Information for Somalia and the Worldwide Caution, which are located on the Department's internet website at <http://travel.state.gov>. American citizens may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or 202-501-4444 from overseas.

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